

Theater Remodeled, Cost of \$50,000; Stage Presentation

TRIB D SEP 21 1939

Two stellar attractions — "Gay Desperado" and "Barbary Coast" — feature the opening tomorrow evening of Oakland's newest theater, the El Rey, at 36th Street and San Pablo Avenue.

Originally the Plaza, the theater has been remodeled at a cost of \$50,000 by the owners, Herbert Bluechel and Paul Aglietti. The property investment alone represents a sum in excess of \$100,000.

Herbert Bluechel Jr. will manage the show for the owners, and according to the policy outlined by them will hold a stage presentation every evening and on Sunday afternoon. The doors will open at 6 p.m. each week day, and at 1 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

"Our policy will be to show the outstanding pictures of the major producers during the past three years only," Bluechel Sr. stated today. "They will be literally the cream of the cinema crop."

Everything in the theater building has been remodeled, Bluechel said. It is completely equipped with new RCA sound equipment, as well as cooling, ventilating and lighting systems. The drapes, stage hangings and curtains also are new.

A feature to be offered by the El Rey is free parking for its patrons. There will be ample room for all to leave their cars conveniently and in safety.

Bluechel and Aglietti have in the theater business for more than 25 years.

Theater Cash Stolen

Thieves who stayed in the building after the last show, looted the cash drawer of the El Rey Theater, 3520 San Pablo Avenue(AP) of \$20 this morning. The theft was discovered today by Janitor Edward Figone.

TRIB JUN 21 1960

El Rey Theater to Open Friday, Sept. 30

The El Rey Theater, located at 35th Street and San Pablo Avenue, will hold its opening night Friday, September 22, it was announced today.

The theater site, recently purchased by H. Bleuchel and Paul Aglietti, involved a sum reported to be \$50,000. Extensive repairs and alterations with the addition of the latest type lighting and sound equipment will make the El Rey one of the finest neighborhood theaters.

In addition to selecting the best movie entertainment Bleuchel, who will manage the El Rey, said, the theater would give a daily stage presentation.

Theater Looted of Sound Equipment

Sound equipment valued at \$2000 was stolen from the Plaza Theater, 3520 San Pablo Avenue, by burglars who looted the unused motion picture house recently, owners reported to Oakland police last night.

Electric motors, generators, and other equipment, were taken by the burglars. The theater, closed for six months, is owned by the Golden State Theater & Realty Company chain.

Many seats were overturned and smashed, and portieres and drapes were torn down, the owners reported.

Robbers Foiled By Theater Safe

Burglars who entered the ~~El Rey~~
~~Theater~~, 3520 San Pablo Avenue,
were unsuccessful in their attempts
to break open the safe, police re-
ported today.

TRIB D DEC 27 1946

Suspect Jailed In Holdup of Theater

George Willie Gibson, 29, of 3032 Magnolia Street, was arrested for investigation of robbery last night, a short time after a holdup in which an undisclosed sum was taken from the cashier at the El Rey Theater 3520 San Pablo Avenue.

Police said Gibson, who denied knowledge of the crime, was identified by the cashier, Miss Nora Duckworth, 18, of 1950 East 26th Street, as the man who held her up by simulating a gun in his pocket. Gibson was taken into custody by Emeryville Policeman Leo Neuberger, who turned him over to Oakland authorities.

One man is dead today because of an attempted holdup a week ago, while a new series of week-end robberies resulted in the threatening and robbing of theater cashiers, a taxi driver and a bartender.

Hit by a bullet which first "creased" the scalp of another customer, James Gorman, 54, of 1369 Eighth Street, died from the wound at Highland Hospital yesterday.

Gorman was sitting in a cafe at 1281 Eighth Street the night of September 24 when a bandit entered and announced it was a stickup.

Startled, the other customers stood up and the gunman fired. The bullet grazed Willie Cruikshank, 76, of 1154 Eighth Street, then struck Gorman's chest.

THEATERS HELDUP

One man was taken into custody as an alleged theater bandit, but a few hours later another holdup man had escaped with \$197.80 after threatening the cashier at the Star Theater, 717 Market Street.

Teddy Lovato, 17, of 903 Myrtle Street, cashier, said the bandit appeared at the window last night, produced a small gun and demanded the bank bag. He then fled with the night's receipts.

George Willie Gibson, 29, of 3032 Magnolia Street, arrested for investigation of robbery Saturday night, has been identified by two girls as a theater bandit, police said.

Gibson was picked up as a result of a description broadcast shortly after the robbery of the El Rey Theater, 3520 San Pablo Avenue.

IDENTIFIED CASHIER

He was identified by the cashier, Nora Duckworth, 17, of 1950 East 26th Street, who had handed over \$73 after he simulated a gun in his pocket. Police said Gibson had \$73 in his pockets when he was picked up by Patrolman Leo Neuberger.

The suspect also was identified by Genevieve Smith of 2834 Filbert Street as the man who robbed the Rialto Theater at 2723 San Pablo Avenue on September 21.

DON'T SMOKE, SAID THE CLOWN

And Biff With His Flipper

TR B MAR 15 1951

Dented the Hour-Glass Stripper

Inez Claire, 34, Oakland burlesque stripper, didn't think it was funny when a comedian put a couple of dents in her hour-glass figure.

In fact, Miss Claire felt the incident so lacking in humor that she asked the district attorney to swear out a battery warrant against Bruce Brooks, comedian at the El Rey, a burlesque theater on San Pablo Avenue.

The curvaceous Miss Claire,

displaying a variety of bruises on her face, arms and chest, said they were put there by Bruce who objected to her smoking.

She said she was smoking behind stage and waiting for her cue the other night when Bruce came along, gave her a push and that started the melee.

It took six G-stringed cuties to pull him off, she added.

After that, she said, she passed

Double Bill to Mark
El Rey Anniversary

The Oakland El Rey Theater will be two years old on January 18.

In celebration owner P. A. De Cenzie is planning a double bill with more than twenty-five in the cast.

De Cenzie, for the second anniversary, will feature Miss Tempest Storm, the Micky Award winner.

During the past year De Cenzie has presented Carrie Finnell, The Minsky's Hour Glass Girl, Inez Clair and Renee Andre; Gay Dawn, Bonnie Lee, Marie Voe, Icel, Lady Godiva, Bartlett and King plus many others.

~~THEATER FIRE~~
AUG - 1951
STRIPS HOUSE
OF AUDIENCE

Things got pretty hot last night at the El Rey burlesque house, 3520 San Pablo Avenue. It was the film that couldn't take it.

Just after the take-it-off artists had swiveled off the runway, fire broke out in the projection booth.

Sixteen performers in working undress fled to the street and some 150 customers followed.

Hardly anyone watched the fire crews, but the blaze was squelched in short order. Damage to the house was set at \$1500.

Thug Holds Up El Rey Theater

THE DEC 30 1954

A gunman robbed the cashier of the ~~El Rey Burlesque Theater~~, 3520 San Pablo Ave., of \$146 last night and escaped with an accomplice driving a getaway car.

The cashier, Miss Julie Jarrett, 25, of 684 McLaughlin Ave., Richmond, fainted from shock shortly after police arrived.

She said one man walked up to the box office, pointed a gun through the window and handed her a paper bag. "Put all your currency in this," he demanded. As she filled the bag with money a car pulled up in front of the theater. He took the money and got into the car, described as a 1950 or 1951 black sedan with an amateur radio operator's license plate, police said.

STRIP QUEEN ASKS \$20,000 IN THEATER BEATING CASE

Miss Inez Claire, burlesque stripper at an Oakland theater, has filed suit for \$20,000 damages as a result of a beating she declared she received at the hands of a theater employee on March 15.

The action, filed in Alameda County Superior Court by Herman W. Mintz and J. A. Gunning, Oakland attorneys, names Bruce Brooks, a comedian of 3520 San Pablo Avenue, as her attacker. Named as co-defendants are Peter A. DeCenzie, owner-operator of the El Rey Theater, and several "Does."

Miss Claire, 34, also known as Esther Winston of 320 Westlake Avenue, Daly City, declares she was the victim of battery when an argument developed between her and Brooks over smoking a cigarette backstage while awaiting her cue.

The petition charges Miss Claire suffered severe shock, a dislocated shoulder, and injury to her back, face, chest and head. A possible criminal action against Brooks is under consideration by the District Attorney's office.

Ex-Child Star Sues Bay Theaterman for \$500,000

TUE SEP 2 - 1954

An Oakland and San Francisco burlesque theater magnate, who parlayed a G-string into a string of Gs, is the leading man in a new kind of act today.

The bumps and grinds of 11 years of life with Harry A. Farros, says Irene Cornell, one-time burlesque performer, is worth exactly half of Farros' \$1,000,000 net value.

Miss Cornell's offer to divvy up Farros' fortune was set out in an action filed yesterday in San Francisco Superior Court.

And Miss Cornell feels her demands are only just because she was the guiding hand behind the moves that put Farros into the high income tax brackets.

OWNS FOUR THEATERS

Farros, she said, owns the El Rey Burlesque Theater and the Moulin Rouge Theater, both in Oakland, the Green Street Theater and the Portola Theater, both in San Francisco, and the Casa Del Rey Hotel in Santa Cruz.

And to think, Miss Cornell

ruminates, "he didn't have a dime when I met him."

The 34-year-old former Hollywood child star says her 11-year idyll with Farros ended the Fourth of July when he ungratefully and without explanation walked out of their San Francisco apartment at 416 36th Ave.

"He's a very peculiar man," said Miss Cornell, mystified over Farros' action.

WONDERFUL TIME'

"We went to the Casa del Rey for the Fourth of July and had a wonderful time," the former bubble dancer declared. "Then he told me he was leaving. It's a mystery to me."

Irene asserted that through the years Farros promised he would share equally with her all of his property. And, she said, she contributed some of her own funds to Farros' early ventures.

"But that's the way he is," she says, and added: "But I know my rights."

Farros, who termed Irene's story false said her financial genius was limited to "two weeks worth last year as a cashier."

Miss Cornell's attorney, Pierre J. Ibos offered a few biographical details of his client's life. He said she has played leading roles opposite John Gilbert and Eric von Stroheim and is the daughter of Albert Brighton, who was one of Mary Pickford's leading men.

Ibos added that she had been married to a prominent New York stockbroker and to a descendant of Simon Bolivar, the South American liberator.

She was once known also as the "Body Beautiful," Ibos concluded.

Vice Squad Raids Burlesque Show

~~THE~~ AUG 24 1956
Evelyn West, the burlesque headliner who specializes in stopping shows with her ample charms, was stopped last night when Deputy Police Chief Tom Rogers led a raid on the ~~El Rey~~ Theater, 3520 San Pablo Ave.

Today Miss West, who once sued Jane Russell for \$100,000 for "stealing" her style eight girls of the chorus line and four men employed in various capacities at the theater, appeared before Municipal Judge Edward J. Smith.

They were told to return Tuesday at 9 a.m. to enter pleas to formal complaints of indecent exposure and participating in an indecent show which are to be signed today.

The 13 were hauled off to Oakland City Jail after the raid last night, booked, and, with one exception, released on \$500 bail.

POLICE "OBSERVERS"

Chief Rogers served notice that if the show opens tonight, it will be with police "observers" in the audience. *(line)*

Rogers and eight other officers gathered evidence last night by sitting through the complete show. They then sent the audience home and rounded up the performers as they reached their dressing rooms.

Miss West, 29, was booked under both the Oakland Municipal Code and the State Penal Code for participating in an indecent show and for indecent exposure.

Similarly booked were the chorus girls, Doris Crawford, 25, and Rita Moreno, 27, of the Roxie Hotel; Donna Daily, 18, of 3875 Ruby St.; Patsy Curtis, 20, of 1428 Alice St.; Lillian Jones, 29, of 3875 Ruby St., all of Oakland and Viana Wills, 28, of 1360 Berkeley Way, Berkeley; Marlene McDonald, 21, of 2451 Church Lane, San Pablo and Togore Gari, 35, of 57 Taylor St., San Francisco.

4 MEN LISTED

The four men are Charles Castle, 45, of 1260 45th Ave., San Francisco; Al Charles, 49, of 81 10th St., identified as Miss West's manager; Frank Fitzpatrick, 43, of 5741 Harmon St., and Will Mason, 54, of 3815 San Pablo Ave., Emeryville.

Fitzpatrick, the theater's assistant manager, is the only one still in jail. He and Charles were booked under both state and municipal code violations while Castle and Mason were booked for participating in an indecent show under the municipal code.

Fitzpatrick is on parole from San Quentin for robbery, police said.

Absent when the police moved in was the El Rey's owner, Peter A. DeCenzie. Rogers said a warrant for his arrest may be issued today.

ne, Sunday, Aug. 26, 1956

~~IN 5C AUG 26 1956~~

Burlesque Figures To Ask Jury Trial

Burlesque headliner Evelyn West and 12 others arrested with her when the El Rey Theater was raided Thursday, will prob-

ably call for a jury trial. Their attorney, Chester Caldecott of Oakland, said that the 13 performers and theater officials met with him yesterday and said they wanted to plead innocent to charges of indecent exposure and appearing in an indecent show.

Miss West and seven of the

eight chorines hauled off to jail Thursday were back at their old stand Friday — but giving a show that Deputy Police Chief Tom Rogers said was "entirely different" than that of Thursday. Police "observers" were in the audience which saw Miss West and company go through their routines.

Burlesque Raid Plea ~~THE~~ AUG 28 1956 Date Set

Bouncy Evelyn West and 13 others arrested in a police raid on the El Rey Theater last week will enter pleas to charges of indecent exposure and taking part in an indecent show at 10 a.m. Thursday.

With them in court will be Peter A. DeCenzie, 49, of 384 42nd St., the theater's owner, who was "missing" during the raid but surrendered to police today.

A warrant for DeCenzie's arrest on charges of allowing an indecent show was issued late yesterday. He is free on \$500 bail.

Miss West and the others arrested Thursday night, including eight chorines, appeared before Municipal Judge Edward J. Smith today.

He continued the case until Thursday after Chester Caldecott and Nathaniel Cohen, attorneys for the defendants, filed demurrers in which they maintained that charges could not be filed under both State and municipal codes.

Caldecott has indicated that a jury trial will be requested.

'Purified' IRE AUG 25 1956 Show Given After Raid

Bouncy Evelyn West and seven of the eight El Rey Burlesque Theater chorines arrested with her Thursday for indecent exposure were back at their old stand last night, warmly clad in two sets of everything.

Even Deputy Police Chief Tom Rogers, who led the raid on the theater at 3520 San Pablo Ave., was satisfied that last night's show was "entirely different."

Rogers sent two officers to the theater as "observers" when Miss West, whose ample charms are insured for \$50,000, put on her first performance since being released from Oakland City Jail on \$500 bail.

NO DIFFERENT

"Last night's show was so different from Thursday's that the officers couldn't help laughing," Rogers said. "But we will continue to keep the theater under surveillance."

However, Frank Fitzpatrick, 43, the theater's assistant manager, maintained the latest performance was "no different than before. I still have no idea why the police decided to raid us."

Explaining Thursday's raid on the El Rey, which has operated for nine years without trouble, Rogers said: "We have had complaints that the show has been getting progressively worse. We watched it and objected to the 'extra' bumps and grinds, the lack of costumes and the extremely smutty remarks of men 'planted' in the audience."

NOTHING EXTRA

But last night's audience, no larger than usual, got nothing "extra" according to the police observers and others, except a look at double layers of scanties and brassieres.

Meanwhile, Chester Caldecott, attorney for Miss West, the chorines and the four men arrested with them said that he will meet with his clients today and recommend that they ask for a jury trial. If they agree,

INDECENT?

Strip Show

Jury Trial 1956

Set Nov. 1

All 14 defendants arrested on charges of staging an indecent burlesque show at the El Rey Theater Aug. 23 will be tried simultaneously in a jury trial before Municipal Judge Charles W. Fisher Nov. 1.

The Nov. 1 trial date had originally been slated for headliner Evelyn West alone. The others, including eight chorines were to be tried today. Attorneys for the other defendants appeared before Judge Fisher today, however, and won a delay until November.

Al Charles, 49; Charles Castle, 45, and Will Mason, 54, were charged with participating in an indecent show and theater manager Peter DeCenzie, 49, and his assistant, Frank Fitzpatrick, 43, were charged with permitting an indecent performance.

Stripper to Do Solo in Court

SEP - 5 1956

Burlesque headliner Evelyn West will star in a solo act when she and 13 others arrested for putting on an indecent show at the El Rey Theater are tried in Oakland Municipal Court.

The 14, including eight chorines, pleaded innocent before Judge Edward J. Smith today. All asked for jury trials and Judge Smith told them to return to court on Friday.

Miss West, demure as she has been throughout her court appearances, told the judge she planned to go out of town for the weekend.

Judge Smith then ruled that she could stand trial alone on Nov. 1.

During today's court session, Nate Cohn, counsel for the strippers and five men connected with the theater, lost his attempt to have them charged under either the State or Municipal code—but not both.

Charged with both indecent exposure and taking part in an indecent show are Miss West, 29; Dolly Crawford, 25; Rita Moreno, 27; Donna Daily, 18; Patsy Curtis, 20; Lillian Jones, 29; Viana Wills, 28; Marlene McDonald, 21; Togore Gari, 35; Frank Fitzpatrick, 43 and Al Charles, 49, Miss West's manager.

Peter A. DeCenzie, 49, the theater's owner who was missing when the El Rey was raided by

nine police officers Aug. 23, was subsequently arrested and charged with permitting an indecent show. Charles Castle, 45 and Will Mason, 54, face similar charges.

Between court appearances Miss West, whose ample anatomy is insured for \$50,000, is continuing to present the show at the theater, 3520 San Pablo Ave.

However, Deputy Police Chief Tom Rogers, who led the raiding party, has reported that it is an "entirely different" performance from the one that he and the other officers watched—and stopped to make the arrests.

Burlesque Show Trial ~~Nov 2 - 1956~~ Opens Here

A jury of seven men and five women who face the possibility of attending a burlesque show will begin hearing testimony today in the trial of 14 entertainers charged with participating in a lewd and lascivious show.

Municipal Judge Charles W. Fisher yesterday heard 24 arguments against the prospective jurors. A jury was chosen at 4:25 p.m. yesterday afternoon.

Attorneys for the defense, who challenged 19 of the jurors, were Nathan Cohn and Chester Caldecott.

Five prospective jurors were questioned by Asst. Dist. Attorneys Al Heferman and Lawrence Horan.

The defendants, 14 of whom participate in, or manage burlesque in Oakland, are on trial for two counts of misdemeanor violations.

A vice squad raid on Aug. 23, led by Deputy Chief Thomas Rogers, alleged that all 14 violated state and municipal ordinances.

"Treasure Chest" Evelyn West (who claims 41, but not as her age) was absent from the trial, along with her manager, Al Charles, 39, of 81 10th St.

According to reports, Miss West, who's real age is somewhere between 29 and 39 years, was somewhere in New Orleans.

Judge Fisher said that the charges against the two would be tried "in absentia."

Those charged with lewd and lascivious conduct or participating in a lewd show are: Doris Crawford, 25; Rita Moreno, 27; Donna Daily, 18; Patsy Curtis, 20; Viana Wills, 28; Marlene McDonald, 21; Togore Gari, 35; Charles Castle, 45; Frank Fitzpatrick, 43; Will Mason, 54; Lillian Jones, 23; Pete DeCenzie, owner of the El Rey Theater.

El Rey Show

Trial to Be

NOV 3 - 1956
Resumed

The jury trial of nine women and five men, charged with staging an indecent show at the El Rey Burlesque Theater, will resume at 9:20 a.m. Monday in the courtroom of Municipal Judge Charles W. Fisher.

The trial opened yesterday before a jury of seven men and five women. Only witness called to the stand was Deputy Police Chief Thomas Rogers, who led an enthusiastic vice squad raid at the theater Aug. 23.

In a sometimes halting manner, Rogers attempted to describe the bare facts of the case.

RESTRAINED DESCRIPTION

His testimony, interlaced with restrained descriptions of "little bits of cloth, G-strings and spangles," took four hours.

Courtroom observers said Chief Rogers had the jury's undivided attention.

First indication that the trial may confront the jury with some really revealing evidence came in the form of a three-minute movie which Chief Rogers said was taken by members of his raiding party.

Objections by defense attorneys Nathan Cohn and Chester Caldecott, who argued that the film was incomplete and therefore did not represent the true picture of the various performances, were overruled by Judge Fisher. He called the film "a part of the whole show."

ENTERTAINERS SHOWN

The film showed each of the nine female entertainers in brief scenes, illuminated by spotlights and unhampered by superfluous attire. Featured was Evelyn "Treasure Chest" West, who with her manager Al Charles is being tried in absentia.

Other defendants in the misdemeanor action are Doris Crawford, 25; Rita Moreno, 27; Donna Daily, 18; Patsy Curtis, 20; Viana Wills, 28; Marlene McDonald, 21; Togore Gari, 35; Charles Castle, 45; Frank Fitzpatrick, 43; Will Mason, 54; Lillian Jones, 23, and Pete DeCenzie, lessee of the theater.

Getting Facts Can Be Grind

NOV 6 - 1956

Collecting bare facts can be difficult, Deputy Police Chief Thomas J. Rogers has told an Oakland Municipal Court jury.

In his second day as star witness against eight shapely dancers and six men charged with putting on an indecent show, Chief Rogers yesterday detailed the police raid on the El Rey Burlesque Theater Aug. 23.

A plain-clothesman, he said, was armed with a motion picture camera. However, the officer was so busy ducking each time an usher came down the aisle that both he and the camera missed a good part of the stage show.

HAD TO DUCK, TOO

Another officer was in the audience with a miniature tape recorder to pick up the dialogue for use as evidence. He had to duck, too, and smashed the recorder before it got going.

Chief Rogers, however, saw and heard the show—and described much of it.

He qualified himself as a witness by volunteering that he had studied biology and zoology, is 47 years old and had once attended a burlesque show in Los Angeles for entertainment.

He also knows an off-color joke when he hears one, Chief Rogers told the jury.

POLICE WARNING

As early as last January, he said, police warned Peter A. DeCenzie, 49, owner of the El Rey, that there were persistent reports that the show needed to be cleaned up. De Cenzie was told he would have to decide where to draw the line, Chief Rogers said.

As the trial ended its third day and recessed for an election

day holiday, Municipal Judge Charles W. Fisher warned the jury and attorneys not to turn the trial into a "humorous type of show."

"The defendants here are on trial for a violation of the municipal code and should be treated as such," the judge said.

Among the defendants, in addition to DeCenzie, are buxom Evelyn West, 39, longtime El Rey headliner, and her manager, Al Charles, 39, who are being tried in absentia.

EL REY**Burlesque****Dialogue****RE NOV 7 - 1956****Read Jury**

The jury hearing evidence against Evelyn "Treasure Chest" West and other El Rey Theater burlesque dancers today listened to a second vivid account of the bumps and grinds.

Police Lt. Jon Arca, a short-hand expert assigned to record as much dialogue and action as possible during a matinee performance last Aug. 23, read the jury a transcript of his short-hand notes in the court of Municipal Judge Charles W. Fisher.

Arca explained under questioning that his account was complete and accurate except for brief omissions. It wasn't that he couldn't take notes on everything said and done on stage that caused the omissions, but rather that he had to stop taking notes each time an usher approached to avoid arousing suspicion that the theater was under surveillance.

Pictures taken of the show girls, movie film of the show shown the jury earlier and a statement taken from Frank Fitzpatrick, 43, an El Rey employee, were admitted into evidence. Fitzpatrick told police he had a combination job of manager and bouncer to usher out patrons who got out of hand.

Charged with lewd and lascivious conduct are five men and nine women, including Miss West. Miss West, however, is not in court. She is being tried "in absentia."

GIRL CLEARED

~~NOV 9 - 1956~~

Defendants in El Rey Trial Down to 13

Jury deliberation in the El Rey burlesque trial will concern only 13 defendants after charges against the 14th—a 20-year-old girl—were dismissed today.

Patsy Curtis, who said she is a former Oklahoma City TV star, was released as a defendant after Deputy Dist. Atty. Al Hederman told the court that there was insufficient evidence against her. He said she had been in only one tableau and in the burlesque business for only four days.

The case neared the jury as Prosecutor Lawrence Horan and Defense Atty. Chester Caldecott presented final arguments.

ACQUITTAL SOUGHT

The defense sought acquittal on a state penal code charge holding that under state law a conviction brands the person as a sex offender for the remainder of his life.

Meanwhile Evelyn "Treasure Chest" West, 39, and her manager, Al Charles, 39, are in contempt of court for failure to appear as defendants in the trial.

Municipal Judge Charles W. Fisher issued a bench warrant for the two with bail of \$1,000 each. They are reportedly in Louisiana.

Miss West was the headliner at the show when police raided it last August.

DEFENSE RESTS

The defense rested yesterday after a parade of the defendants, who, prim and tidy, told the court and jury they didn't believe the show was indecent or violated morals. The defendants are on trial for violations of the state and municipal codes charging them with participating or promoting a lewd and obscene show.

Five women performers testified that they stripped to "G-strings" during their few moments on the stage. There was no demonstration but Miss Togore Gari, 35, who testified that she does an East Indian type of dance, submitted her "costume" as evidence.

This was a G string and a net bra. As they were handed to Court Clerk Jesse Holmes, he asked Judge Fisher "which is which?" Later he explained he wanted to know how to mark them for identification.

'PARADE TYPE'

she does an East Indian type of dance, submitted her "costume" as evidence.

This was a G string and a net bra. As they were handed to Court Clerk Jesse Holmes, he asked Judge Fisher "which is which?" Later he explained he wanted to know how to mark them for identification.

PARADE TYPE'

Lili Ann Jones told the court and jury she was "a parade type" who "struts around" as she strips. Asked if she moved her hips she replied:

"If my hips move when I walk, its just natural."

Feminine charms are backed by routines a half century old, Will Mason, a 54-year-old comedian, testified. Mason, who lists as former associates Lou Costello, Red Skelton and Pinky Lee, said the skits never have been found offensive before.

He had the backing in this contention of his stage partner Al Castle, 45. Deputy Atty. Larry Horan told some of the jokes but there was no indication he enjoyed the proceedings.

El Rey Trial

Spotlight on

LINE. NOV 8 - 1956

Strippers

The trial of 14 men and women charged with putting on an indecent show at Oakland's El Rey Burlesque progressed to the main feature today as eight stripteasers began testifying in their own defense.

Yesterday the spotlight was on Wilma Stafford, 23, the theater's cashier, who testified that four off-duty policemen were in the audience—for free—when Deputy Police Chief Thomas Rogers and vice squad members paid their way in on Aug. 23 to raid the place.

Miss Stafford said under oath that the men, in civilian clothes, flashed "what looked like" police officers' badges to walk in without paying.

"They had the same kind of badges police have been using to get in free for the four and one-half years I've worked there," Miss Stafford told the jury of five women and seven men.

Peter O. DeCenzie, 51, the theater manager, backed her up by explaining that it is "traditional" to admit police without charge.

Missing from today's performance was Evelyn West, 39, headliner at the El Rey the night police watched the bumps and grinds and decided the performers were wearing too little and putting too much into their routines. She and her manager, Al Charles, 39, are being tried in absentia.

~~NOV 8 - 1956~~

Strip Tease Dancer

Held in Contempt

Miss Evelyn West, El Rey
Theater headliner, was cited for
contempt of Oakland Municipal
Court this afternoon by Judge
Charles W. Fisher.

Miss West has not appeared
in court although she is one of
14 defendants in a misdemeanor
trial growing out of the El Rey's
type of entertainment. Judge
Fisher thinks Miss West should
be in court, so issued a bench
warrant for her arrest.

Miss West and her manager
and "straight man," Al Charles,
were reported to be in New
Orleans.

Earlier Details, Page 38

Stripper and Manager Get 90 Days

NOV 15 1956

Evelyn "Treasure Chest" West, the ~~El Rey~~ stripper, and her manager, Al Charles, have been sentenced to serve 90 days in the county jail, to pay a fine of \$1,000 each, and were placed on three years probation.

Both were convicted by a municipal court jury Saturday for participating in a lewd and indecent show. They were tried "in absentia."

Judge Charles W. Fisher, following the sentence, observed "this sentence may well prevent Miss West and Mr. Charles from ever returning to California. Very frankly, I hope it does.

"They put on a show completely lewd, completely obscene, completely lustful, and completely lacking in decent humor."

The two are reportedly in New Orleans and no effort will be made to extradite them, Judge Fisher said, because their offenses were misdemeanors, not felonies.

Four others convicted in the trial will be sentenced on Nov. 29. They are Pete DeCenzie, owner of the theater; Charles Castle; Will Mason and Dolly Crawford, performers.

Show Girl, Manager ~~TRG X NOV 14 1956~~ Get 90 Days

Evelyn (Treasure Chest) West and her manager, convicted in the El Rey burlesque trial, were sentenced today "in absentia" to 90 days each in the county jail.

Municipal Judge Charles W. Fisher denied a motion for a retrial for Miss West and Al Charles, 49, who are believed to be in Louisiana.

The pair also was ordered to pay a \$1,000 fine each, placed on probation for three years, and given a suspended sentence of 270 days each on the condition that they refrain from any similar violations, obey all laws and follow directives of the probation officer.

Judge Fisher, noting their absence, said "this sentence may well prevent Miss West and Mr. Charles from ever returning to California, and very frankly I hope it does."

He added: "I consider Evelyn West and Al Charles as having put on a show completely lewd, completely obscene, and completely lustful and completely lacking in decent humor."

The judge ruled that Miss West, convicted also of indecent exposure, would not have to register with authorities as those convicted under the section are often required to do.

Four others convicted with Miss West and Charles will be sentenced Nov. 29.

El Rey Stripper Queen Convicted

NOV 10 1956

A jury of seven men and five women, after an 11-hour marathon session, found six of the 14 defendants in the El Rey burlesque trial guilty early today.

The jury, which deliberated until 2:32 a.m. found Evelyn (Treasure Chest) West, her manager, two male comedians, one stripper and the owner of the theater guilty. Six women and the theater's assistant manager were acquitted.

Miss West and her manager, Al Charles, who doubles as the audience stooge, were tried in absentia and found guilty of indecent exposure and participating in a lewd show. Both now are in New Orleans, and bench warrants for their arrest were issued.

MUST REGISTER

The four others were convicted of lesser charges. Conviction may require, if the sentencing judge so specifies, that both Miss West and Charles register as sex offenders in every California town to which they move in their theatrical travels.

Both face sentences of up to six months in jail, fines of \$500 on each count, or both.

The late hour deliberation set a record for a Municipal Court, according to Municipal Judge Charles Fisher.

Besides Miss West and her

manager, four other persons were found guilty, but only on the lesser municipal code violation of participating in an indecent show.

They are: Pete Decenzie, owner of the El Rey, Will Mason, 54, and Charles Castle, 45, comedians; and Dolly Crawford, 45.

SENTENCING TUESDAY

Sentencing will be at 9 a.m. Tuesday.

Those acquitted: Donna Daily, 18; Rita Moreno, 27; Viana Wills, 28; Marlene McDonald, 21; Togore Gari, 35; Lillian Jones, 23; and Frank Fitzpatrick, 43, the assistant manager of the theater. All had been charged with lewd and lascivious conduct and participating in a lewd show.

Lawyers for the defense said that the guilty verdicts would be appealed.

El Rey Manager Sentenced to Jail

Peter DeCenzie, 51, owner-manager of Oakland's El Rey Burlesque Theater, today was fined \$500 and ordered to jail for five days for permitting an indecent show.

He was not expected to begin his term immediately, as his attorneys announced they would file a notice of appeal and post a \$750 bond this afternoon.

DeCenzie was actually given a 180-day jail sentence, but Municipal Judge Charles W. Fisher suspended 175 days as a condition of three years probation.

OTHERS SENTENCED

Sentenced with DeCenzie, whose theater was raided by Oakland police Aug. 23, were Will Mason, 54, and Charles Castle, 45, comedians, \$300 or

60 days in the county jail and 90-day suspended sentences as part of three years probation, and Dolly Crawford, a stripper, \$100 or 20 days in jail and two years probation. Mason, Castle and Miss Crawford indicated they would pay the fines.

STILL MISSING

Evelyn West, the El Rey headliner at the time of the raid, and her manager, Al Charles, 49, were each sentenced to 90-day jail terms and \$1,000 fines Nov. 14. However, as during their "in absentia" trial, they still are missing and are believed to be in Louisiana.

Fourteen men and women were arrested Aug. 23 after officers watched the El Rey show for several hours. Charges against one of the performers were dropped during the trial. Only six of the others were found guilty.

~~TR G~~ APR 12 1957

Burlesque Group Appeals Verdict

Five members of the cast of the El Rey Burlesque Theater and its owner-manager appealed to the appellate department of the Superior Court today for a ruling on the Municipal Court decision that found them guilty of taking part in a lewd and indecent show.

A police raid at the San Pablo Ave. show on Oct 23 resulted in charging the six and a jury trial before Municipal Judge Charles Fisher began on Nov. 1 and ended on Nov. 9. A motion for a new trial was denied two days later.

Those found guilty and for whom the appeal is being made are Evelyn West, a dancer; Pete DeCenzie, the manager; Dolly Crawford, Will Mason, Charles Castle and Al Charles.

e, Thursday, May 30, 1957

TRE MAY 30 1957

Burlesque Show Conviction Upheld by Appellate Court

The conviction of Manager and other performers of the Peter A. De Cenzie, strip artist Rey Theater on charges of presenting a lewd and immoral show has been upheld by the Appellate Division of Alameda County Superior Court.

Superior Judges S. Victor Wagler, Thomas J. Ledwich, and Ralph E. Hoyt have handed down a decision affirming the verdict of a jury in the court of Municipal Judge Charles Fisher,

show has been upheld by the Appellate Division of Alameda County Superior Court.

The jury found Miss West and Al Charles guilty of a violation of the state law prohibiting indecent exposure in public and they, together with four others, were found guilty of violation of the municipal code banning obscene, indecent, lewd and immoral conduct.

Miss West and Charles, who

were on tour and did not appear in the municipal court hearing were sentenced in absentia. They were fined \$1,000 each and sentenced to 90 days in jail. Judge Fisher also found them to be sex offenders and as such they are required to register in any California city in which they

may appear.

De Cenzie was fined \$500 and given five days in jail. Dolly Crawford, a performer, was given a \$100 fine or 20 days in jail; Will Mason and Charles Castle, performers, were fined \$300 or 60 days in jail. The sentences were held up pending the ruling on appeal.

TR E JUN 25 1957

El Rey Gives Up Plans For Moving

EMERYVILLE, June 25 — Peter De Cenzie, operator of the El Rey burlesque theater, has withdrawn his application to stage a similar show in Emeryville.

De Cenzie's application was withdrawn yesterday in a phone call to William A. Siebel, city clerk.

The application was made last week by the theater man who was seeking to find a home for his Oakland burlesque house, which will be demolished to make way for a freeway.

He had considered establishing the theater at 3620 San Pablo Ave., 30 feet north of the present El Rey and just over the Emeryville line.

More than two dozen housewives and P-TA representatives were present at last night's council meeting to protest the move. The Emeryville P-TA went on record as objecting to the theater in a petition filed at last night's session.

~~TRG MAY 29 1957~~

Conviction of Burlesquers

Here Upheld

The appellate division of the Alameda County Superior Court today upheld the conviction of Peter DeCenzie, 52, owner-manager of the El Rey Burlesque Theater, and five others for staging an alleged indecent show at the theater Aug. 23, 1956.

Convicted with DeCenzie were Evelyn West, 40, and Dolly Crawford, 45, strippers; Al Charles, 50, Miss West's manager, and Will Mason, 55, and Charles Castle, 46, comedians.

All were convicted of violating a municipal ordinance dealing with obscenity. Miss West and Charles were also convicted of violating an indecent exposure section of the state penal code.

DeCenzie was sentenced by Oakland Municipal Judge Charles W. Fisher to pay a \$500 fine and serve five days in jail. Mason and Castle were given their choice of paying \$300 or serving 60 days in the county jail each. Miss West and Charles were each sentenced to 90-day jail terms and \$1,000 fines.

Continued Page D, Col. 5

TR G JUL 31 1957

Burlesque Theater

Man Loses Appeal

The District Court of Appeals in San Francisco today denied a petition for a writ of habeas corpus for a new trial filed by Peter A. DeCenzie, operator of the El Rey Burlesque theater, in connection with a jail sentence for staging an indecent show.

DeCenzie was fined \$500 and sentenced to five days in jail last November following his conviction in Superior Court on the charge of presenting the indecent show at the El Rey theater Aug. 23, 1956.

His conviction subsequently was upheld by the appellate division of the Alameda County Superior Court.

TRE JUL 12 1957

Oakland Tribune, Friday, July 12, 1957

E II

Evelyn West, 5 Others Fail To Show Up for Sentence

Evelyn (Treasure Chest) West and five other persons formerly identified with the now-defunct ~~El Rey~~ burlesque theater, failed to appear in Municipal Court here today, as scheduled, to be sentenced for staging an indecent show at the theater last August.

As a result, Judge C. S. Wood ordered bench warrants issued for their arrest.

The defendants, Miss West, 40, and her manager, Al Charles, 50, dancer Dolly Crawford, 45, comedians Charles Costello, 45, and Will Mason, 54, and theater owner Pete DeCenzie, 49, were convicted last Nov. 10 of violating a municipal law dealing with obscenity.

Miss West and Charles also were convicted of violating an indecent exposure section of the

state penal code. They appealed the conviction, but it was upheld by the appellate court department of the Superior Court and the defendants were ordered to appear today for "execution of sentence."

Miss West and Charles, both of whom were convicted "in absentia," were each sentenced to \$1,000 fines and 90 days in jail; DeCenzie was fined \$500 and sentenced to five days in jail; Mason and Castle were fined \$300 each and Miss Crawford was fined \$100.

16 1957

Will Observe 8th Birthday

The Oakland El Rey Theater is not the oldest, biggest or the newest burlesque theater on the West Coast, but starting on Friday the theater will celebrate its eighth birthday, nonetheless.

While it is true that the State Highway Department is waiting to make this mosque of the ecdysiast a part of the freeway system of the East Bay, owner-manager Peter De Cenzie says, he trusts this will not happen during the celebration.

The best known luminary of the El Rey alumna, Tempest Storm, is to be the star on this her last Bay Area engagement.

The El Rey, which seats less than 750 people, was built in the mid '20s as the Plaza, a legitimate theater. As the movies became more popular the house was a neighborhood theater, a showhouse for traveling shows and an art music house during the '40s.

De Cenzie, who had experience as a road-showman and as a burlesque theater owner in Portland, Ore., took over the theater in 1949. To open the house De Cenzie had a staff of five girls and two men. Of these Suzy Gaye, Terry Lane and Bruce Brooks are now featuring in various shows across the country.

As the El Rey, the theater achieved a world-wide reputation, since among its patrons have been travelers from Norway, England and Iran as well as from all over the United States.

Tempest Storm skyrocketed from \$100 to more than \$2,000 a week after appearing at the El Rey.

TR D JUN 18 1957

Burlesque in Emeryville Brings Horrified Protest

EMERYVILLE, June 18—Labor Temple, would operate Members of the Emeryville city council today voiced their antagonism to proposals to move the Oakland El Rey burlesque theater inside the Emeryville city limits.

The council earlier denied Potsada a license on the grounds that another person would be operating the business.

The famed entertainment center has been dispossessed of its present building by the State Highway Commission, which intends to run a freeway through the site.

During last night's council meeting, councilman William Coddington told the theater owner, Peter De Cenzie, that he "didn't care where you locate, but I don't want the El Rey in Emeryville."

Action to permit De Cenzie to lease for his shows a building at 3620 San Pablo Ave., owned by Aubrey Molin, was deferred one week. Earlie rthis month Molin unsuccessfully attempted to lease the building to a salami manufacturer.

The council denied a cardroom license applied for by Oakland attorney Carl A. Potstada. Joseph Anderson, who was described by Potstada as a former game operator at the Oakland

STAGE AND SCREEN

Tempest to Help Close Up El Rey

TRE JUN 21 1957 By THERESA LOEB CONE
Tri-Weekly Drama Editor

A burlesque dancer whose career really got under way with her first appearance at the El Rey in 1951, will be on hand during the week ending July 3, to participate in that theater's swan song. After the now famous Tempest Storm helps close the El Rey's doors for the last time, that theater will be vacant until it is demolished to make way for the freeway. Miss Storm, red-haired, well-rounded and now well-heeled due to her rise from \$75 weekly in '51 to \$4,000 weekly in '57, is the highest paid burlesque performer in the U.S., but like the El Rey, she, too, is about to break into swan song strains. After her short engagement in Oakland, she will do one more burlesque date in Hawaii and then plans to leave public strip-teasing forever.

She is about to make her debut in straight drama, has a starring role lined up in a Dayton, Ohio strawhat staging of "Bus Stop," due to be seen this summer. From then on, says Miss Storm, she hopes to continue on the stage in "serious" roles. And that is that.

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